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A NEW YEAR
GREETING

THE CAVALIER IN AMERICA

LYON G. TYLER

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Sir Humphrey Gilbert

THE CAVALIER IN AMERICA

Gift
Author
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The Cavalier in America

I.

WESTWARD HO!

The twin sponsors of American colonization were two cavaliers during the days of Queen Elizabeth—Sir Humphrey Gilbert and his half-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh. They conceived the idea, that to destroy the superiority of Spain, England must plant a colony in the New World. Accordingly the former obtained a patent of colonization in 1678, and attempted to establish a settlement in the neighborhood of Newfoundland. The attempt proved futile, and in the effort the noble Gilbert was drowned in the waves of the angry ocean. His last words will ever be kept in precious remembrance: "We are as near heaven by sea as by land." The latter—Sir Walter Raleigh—the most accomplished man of his age, and a cavalier in the best sense of the

word, renewed the undertaking, and in 1587 established a colony on Roanoke Island, in Pamlico Sound. Success seemed to go with the enterprise, and Queen Elizabeth gave the name Virginia to all North America.

But a crisis in the history of England arose, and the kingdom, confronted with the Armada and the whole embattled power of Spain, had to fight for her very existence In. the mighty strife, the little group of men, women and children on Roanoke Island were forgotten, and when succor, after three years, at length arrived, the colony had disappeared.

II.

THE FIRST ENGLISH KINGDOM IN AMERICA.

In spite of ill luck, Raleigh predicted that "he would yet live to see Virginia an English nation," and, when in 1605, Spain, humbled and shorn of power, made peace with England, the way was open to a necessary and certain access to the Western World.

Then was formed a company—the Virginia Company of London—which combined the commercial designs of a joint stock corporation with a national and patriotic purpose of adding a fifth kingdom to England. The spirit of Gilbert and Raleigh was fostered in the great leaders of the company—Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Edwin Sandys, Nicholas Ferrar and Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. The new settlement was planted on Jamestown Island in James River, in the present State of Virginia, and held its own against every hardship, whether of climatic disease or Indian attack. When the civil war between the King and Parliament broke out in England, it became the favored place of refuge for hundreds of cavaliers who had taken part with King Charles.

III.

JAMESTOWN THE FIRST INVENTION.

In estimating the influence of this colony on America and American institutions, the following statement is all that can be given in the brief space here allowed. As the first permanent colony of Great Britain, Jamestown may claim as its product, not only the present Virginia and Southland, but all the other English colonies in America, and, indeed, all the colonies of the present wide-spreading British Empire. She is the eldest child of England and the mother of the United States. Her successful settlement furnished the inspiration of English colonization everywhere, and she is, therefore, entitled to the credit of all; for it was Lord Bacon who said that, "As in the arts and sciences the first invention is of more consequence than all the improvements afterwards, so in kingdoms or plantations the first foundation or plantation is of more noble dignity than all that followeth."

IV.

JAMESTOWN MOTHER OF NEW ENGLAND.

It is interesting to know that Jamestown or Virginia has particular claims besides to being considered the mother of New England. In 1613 when the French had already occupied Maine, and their explorers were coasting along the shores of Massachusetts and Connecticut, it was a Virginia Governor, Sir Thomas Gates, who sent an expedition from Jamestown, dislodged the French from their strongholds, and thus kept the country open till the Pilgrim Fathers came along. At this time these worthy people were enjoying the comforts of Holland and never dreaming of a settlement in America. And when, at last, in 1620, they decided to abandon their home in Holland, the only reason, according to Bradford, the Plymouth historian, that they did not go to Dutch Guiana, was because the Virginia Company of London was able to point them to their colony at Jamestown and offer them land and protection. They finally sailed under a patent obtained for them from the company by the noble Sir Edwin Sandys, and it was only the accident of a storm that caused

them to settle outside of the limits of the territory of the London company, though still in Virginia. "The Mayflower Compact," under which they united at Cape Cod, followed pretty nearly the terms of the original London company's patent.

The influence of Jamestown was again felt in 1622, after the arrival of Thomas Weston and his godless crew at Plymouth. The provisions were "wholly spent," and it was only the opportune arrival of two ships from Jamestown that saved the Plymouth colony from starvation. These ships, Bradford says, divided their provisions with the Pilgrims, and thus enabled them to get along "till corn was ripe." Later, in 1634, Sir John Harvey declared that "Virginia had become the granary of all his Majesty's Northern Colonies."

V.

THE CRADLE OF ENGLISH INSTITUTIONS.

Virginia was the cradle of all the English institutions on the continent of America. There the first English marriage was had; there the first child of English parentage was born; there was the first trial by jury; there met the first law-making assembly; there were the first chain of law courts, the first system of recordation of land grants, deeds and wills, the first written constitution for regulating the internal affairs of an English colony (the ordinance of 1618), the first church, the first blockhouse, the first wharf, the first glass factory, the first iron works, the first silk worms reared, the first tobacco raised, the first peaches grown, the first brick house, the first State house, and the first free school established by English people (that of Benjamin Syms, 1635).

VI.

REPRESENTATION AND TAXES.

In the assertion of the principle that taxation should go hand in hand with representation, Virginia led the way in 1624, and repeatedly afterwards insisted on the indissoluble character of the connection.

VII.

THE FIRST BLOW FOR POWER.

In the French and Indian war, out of which sprang the measures that subsequently provoked American independence, it was Virginia that struck the first blow against the French. The result of that war was to destroy French rivalry and to open up the northwest territory to English authority and ultimately American authority. The greatest American name of the war was a Virginian, George Washington, who was sprung from cavalier ancestry on all sides.

VIII.

THE ALARM BELL.

Then again it was the cavalier colony of Virginia that rallied the other colonies against the stamp act by the celebrated resolutions of Patrick Henry, May 29, 1765.

IX.

LEADER UNDER THE REVENUE ACT.

In the years of the revenue act, which succeeded, through circumstances made the occasion for the first movements in other places, it was always Virginia that by some resolute and determined action of leadership solved the crisis that arose. There were four of these crises. The first was when Massachusetts, by her circular letter in 1768, stirred up Parliament to demand that her patriot leaders be sent to England for trial. This crisis was solved by Virginia inviting all the colonies into the measure of non-importation, which forced Parliament to abandon its position and to repeal all taxes except the duty on tea. Then in 1772, when, because of the affair of the sloop *Gaspée* in Rhode Island, the King imitated Parliament by renewing the policy of transporting Americans to England for trial, Virginia, by recommending a close union of the colonies, through the system of inter-colonial committees, averted the danger a second time, and caused the King and his councillors to desist from their purpose.

Then, in 1774, when the port of Boston was shut up by an act of Parliament, because of the action of a disguised and unauthorized mob in throwing the tea into Boston harbor, Virginia was the first colony to declare her sympathy with Boston, and the first, as a unit, to call for a Congress, and to that Congress she furnished the first president, Peyton Randolph, and the greatest orators, Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee. Finally, when a new crisis was created by the battle of Lexington in Massachusetts, the forward step was once more taken by the cavaliers of the South. While Boston was professing, through her town meeting, her willingness "to wait, most patiently to wait," it was North Carolina, settled by Virginians, that instructed her delegates to concur with the delegates from the other colonies in declaring independence, and it was Virginia that commanded her delegates to propose independence. All the world knows that Thomas Jefferson, whose ancestors on both sides were cavaliers, drew up the "Declaration of American Independence," which has been styled by a well-known New England writer as the "most commanding and the most pathetic utterance in any age of national grievances and of national purposes."

X.

A CAVALIER THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY.

During the war that ensued, Virginia contributed what all will allow was the soul of the war —the immortal cavalier, George Washington, whose immense moral personality accomplished more in bringing success than all the money employed, and all the armies placed in the field, and the war had its ending at Yorktown, only a few miles from the original settlement at Jamestown.

XI.

CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

The cavalier State of Virginia was the first State in the world to proclaim absolute equality and freedom of religion to the peoples of all faiths—Christians, Jews, Mohammedan, etc. Her Declaration of Rights, by George Mason, and her statute for Religious Freedom, by Thomas Jefferson, stand unique in history. As the headquarters, after the American Revolution, of the great Democratic Republican party, Virginia became the champion of the popular idea against the aristocratic notions of the Federalists, who had their headquarters in New England. Thus Virginia sowed the seed of civil and religious liberty throughout the United States.

XII.

FIRST TO FORBID THE SLAVE TRADE.

Virginia was the first State in the world to impose penalties for engaging in the slave trade. Her cavalier representatives in the Federal Convntion of 1787 bitterly opposed the provision in the Constitution supported by the Puritan delegates from New England, permitting the slave trade for twenty years.

XIII.

THE CAVALIERS MAKE THE UNION A CONTINENTAL POWER.

In the work of making a constitution for the new government and of organizing it, Virginia, as John Fiske says, furnished "four out of the five constructive statesmen engaged"—Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Marshall, every one of them of cavalier stock. The fifth was Alexander Hamilton, a native of the West Indies and a New Yorker by adoption. In the matter of extending our territories it was the cavalier, George Rogers Clark, that conquered the North West Territory, now represented by five great States. And Louisiana, Florida, Texas, California, New Mexico and all the West were added to the Union by Virginian and Southern Presidents, thus trebling the area of the Republic and making it a continental power.

XIV.

THE RIGHTFUL NAME OF THE REPUBLIC.

"United States of America" are merely words of description. They are not a name. The rightful name of the Republic is the historic name (first given by the greatest of English queens and accepted by the Pilgrim Fathers in the "May Flower" compact) VIRGINIA.

XV.

THE SUMMING UP.

In conclusion, the work of the Cavalier may be summed up thus: There can be no doubt that, while in financiering, in industrial results, and in the promotion of schools and education, he has been, largely owing to circumstances, outdistanced by his Puritan fellow-laborer, his work in the four great fields of colonization, statesmanship, jurisprudence and war, has been supreme. In the extension of territorial power, there never have been any superiors, in breadth of view, to Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh, and their successors, who ruled in the London company or in the colony, and, two centuries later, figured as Presidents of this great Republic (Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Harrison, Tyler and Taylor). In the exercise of the art of nation building, who can be named as superiors to Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and James Monroe? In the domain of law, where are there superiors to John Marshall, Bushrod Washington, Philip P. Barbour, St. George Tucker and Spencer Roane? And in war, what names breathe more of majesty

and military talent than those of Washington, who led the armies of America to independence, and of Scott and Taylor, who carried the flag of the Union to the hall of the Montezumas, and of Robert E. Lee and George H. Thomas, Virginians both, who in our Civil War represented, on opposing sides, the best virtues of the Cavalier—the former, to such an extent that, by the common consent of the world, he has been placed among the purest men and greatest military characters of all history.

And now again, in the year of our Lord 1913, a native of Virginia has been vested with the control of the presidential office of the United States. Under Woodrow Wilson[1] may the

[1] The term "cavalier," is a generic one, and included all who supported the just prerogatives of the Crown under Queen Elizabeth and the Stuarts. Woodrow Wilson is a Presbyterian, but the Presbyterians in England were always for a limited monarchy; and, though they took up arms against King Charles I., in defence of the liberty of the subject, the great body of the Episcopalians in England had also in Parliament opposed his attacks. After the execution of Charles I., these two religious elements united in opposition to the Independents or Congregationalists, who were the real, distinctive Puritans. By their union, Charles II. was restored to the throne; and in subsequent years the most loyal supporters of the Stuarts were the Scotch Presbyterians.

Cavalier spirit, which solved the problems leading to, and growing out of the American Revolution, successfully guide to the solution of the hardly less important problem of the present day!

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